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# Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia

Experimental weekly estimates on the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19) on payroll jobs and wages, sourced from Single Touch Payroll data

Reference period Week ending 17 October 2020

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Released 4/11/2020

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## Key statistics

Between the week ending 14 March and the week ending 17 October 2020:

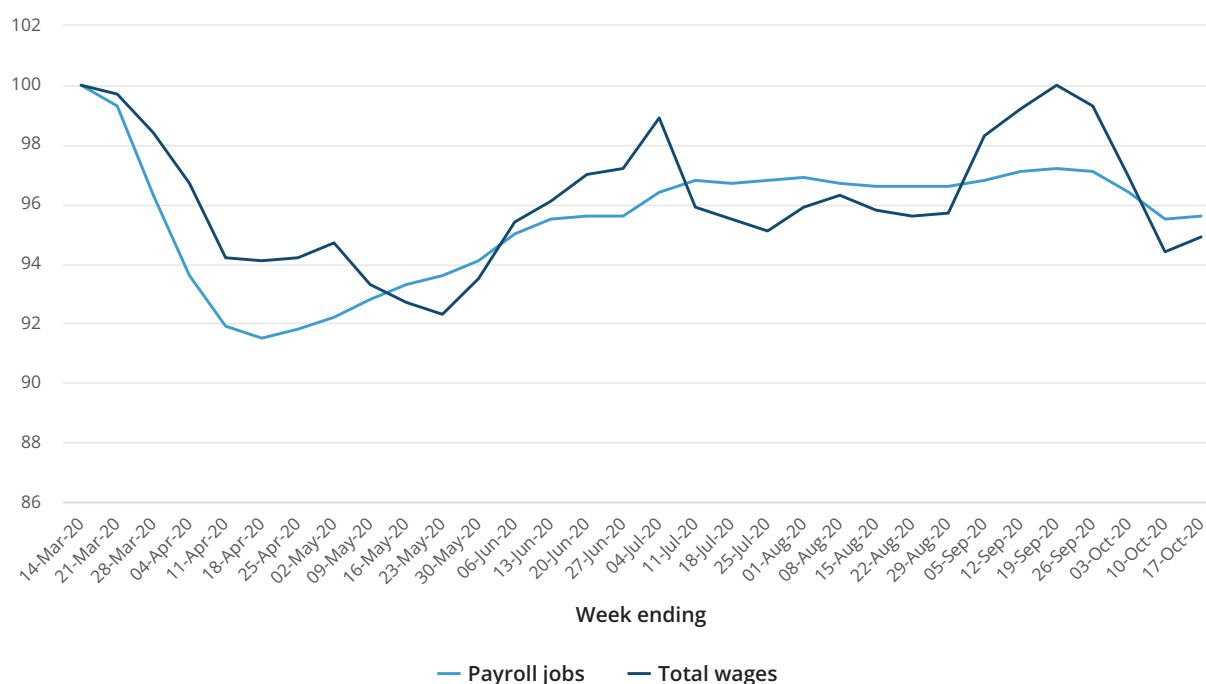
- Payroll jobs decreased by 4.4%
- Total wages decreased by 5.1%

High level analysis suggests that by 17 October 2020 there were approximately 470,000 fewer payroll jobs in STP-enabled businesses than on 14 March 2020.

Between the week ending 3 October 2020 and the week ending 17 October 2020:

- Payroll jobs decreased by 0.8%, compared to a decrease of 0.9% in the previous fortnight
- Total wages paid decreased by 2.1%, compared to a decrease of 3.1% in the previous fortnight

**Graph 1 - Payroll jobs and total wages, indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020 (a)**



a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions). Weekly change data are available in the Data downloads.

## Key COVID-19 dates

- 22 March : Prime Minister announces Stage 2 lock down changes, which are progressively implemented
- 30 March : Prime Minister announces JobKeeper program
- 2 August : Stage 4 restrictions in metropolitan Melbourne and stage 3 restrictions in regional Victoria commence
- 28 September : JobKeeper extension 1 (modified eligibility test) commences

## State and territory

Since the week ending 14 March 2020 the largest changes across states and territories were:

- Payroll jobs : Victoria decreased by 8.0% and Tasmania decreased by 4.8%
- Total wages : Victoria decreased by 6.2% and New South Wales decreased by 5.8%

Between the week ending 3 October 2020 and the week ending 17 October 2020 the largest changes across states and territories were:

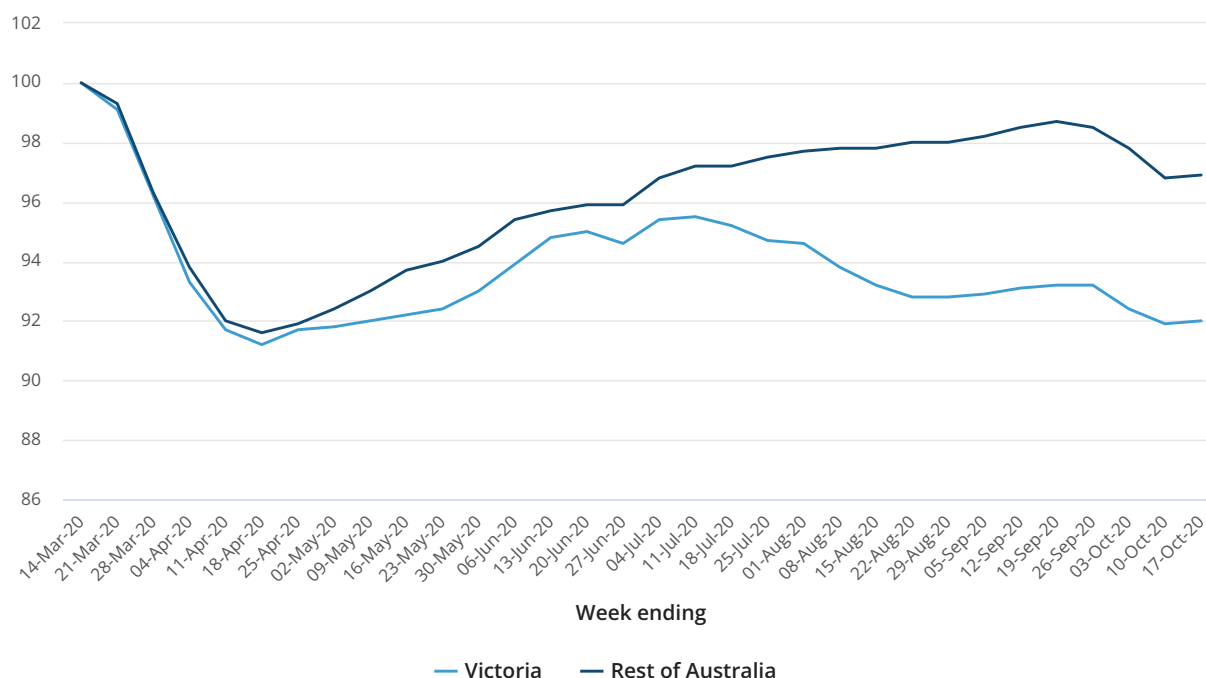
- Payroll jobs : New South Wales decreased by 1.3% and the Northern Territory decreased by 1.1%
- Total wages : Western Australia decreased by 3.3% and Queensland decreased by 2.1%

Table 1 - Percentage change by states and territories

	Payroll jobs		Total wages	
	Change between 3 October and 17 October (a)	Change between 14 March and 17 October	Change between 3 October and 17 October (a)	Change between 14 March and 17 October
New South Wales	-1.3%	-4.0%	-2.0%	-5.8%
Victoria	-0.4%	-8.0%	-1.9%	-6.2%
Queensland	-0.6%	-3.0%	-2.1%	-3.4%
South Australia	-0.3%	-2.0%	-1.7%	-1.9%
Western Australia	-1.0%	-1.4%	-3.3%	-5.4%
Tasmania	-0.9%	-4.8%	-1.0%	-5.4%
Northern Territory	-1.1%	-1.3%	-0.9%	-1.6%
Australian Capital Territory	-0.6%	-3.4%	-2.1%	-3.3%
<b>Australia</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>	<b>-4.4%</b>	<b>-2.1%</b>	<b>-5.1%</b>

a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions). Weekly change data are available in the Data downloads.

**Graph 2 - Payroll jobs by selected geography, indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020 (a)**



a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions).

## Sub-state - payroll jobs

Time series estimates of payroll jobs by sub-state regions are available for Statistical Area 4 (SA4) and Statistical Area 3 (SA3) regions, presented as index values through to the week ending 3 October 2020 (as updated on 21 October 2020) are available in Table 5 of the Data downloads.

SA4 regions are specifically designed to reflect labour markets within each state and territory within population limits. In regional areas, SA4s tend to have lower populations (100,000 to 300,000), while in metropolitan areas, SA4s tend to have larger populations (300,000 to 500,000).

SA3 regions generally have populations between 30,000 and 130,000 persons. They are often the functional areas of regional towns and cities with a population in excess of 20,000, or clusters of related suburbs around urban commercial and transport hubs within the major urban areas.

For more information see [Statistical Geography \(https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Geography\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Geography); [Australian Statistical Geography Standard, Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2016 \(https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.001\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.001); or [Australian Statistical Geography Standard, Volume 3 - Non-ABS Structures, July 2018 \(https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.003\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1270.0.55.003).

## Sex and age group

### Sex

Since the week ending 14 March 2020:

- Payroll jobs : Those worked by males decreased by 5.3% and those worked by females decreased by 4.7%
- Total wages : Payments to males decreased by 7.0% and payments to females decreased by 3.0%

Between the week ending 3 October 2020 and the week ending 17 October 2020:

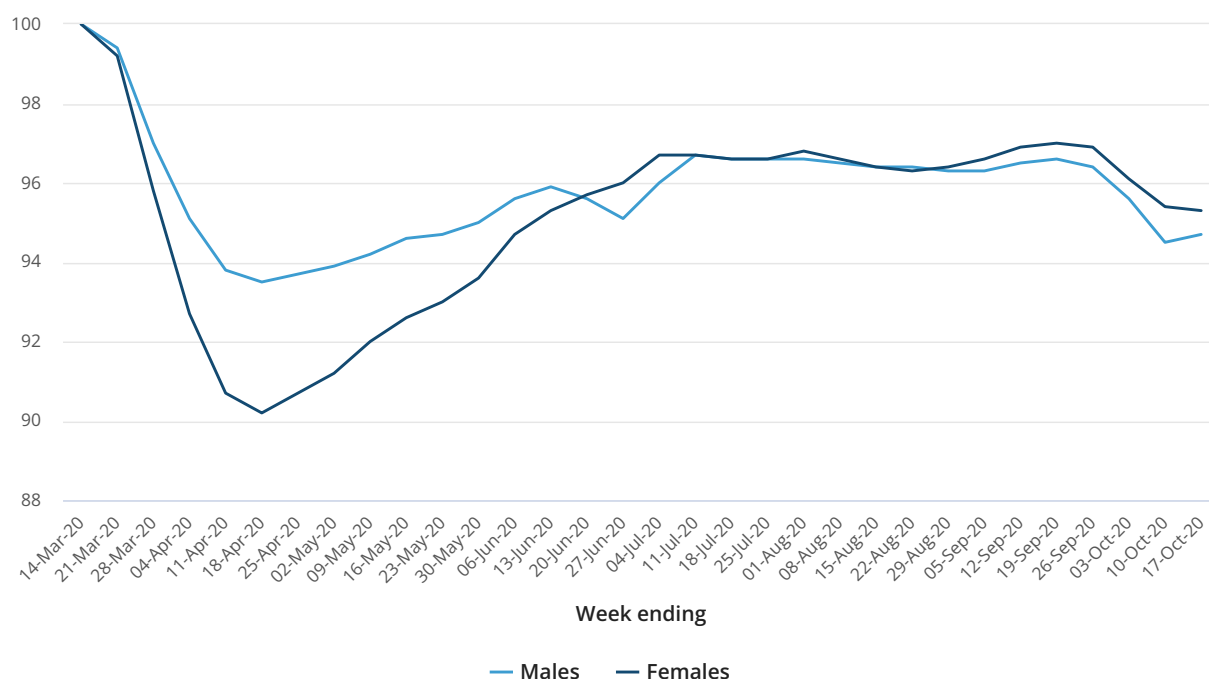
- Payroll jobs : Those worked by males decreased by 0.9% and those worked by females decreased by 0.8%
- Total wages : Payments to males decreased by 2.2% and payments to females decreased by 2.0%

Table 2 - Percentage change by sex

	Payroll jobs		Total wages	
	Change between 3 October and 17 October (a)	Change between 14 March and 17 October	Change between 3 October and 17 October (a)	Change between 14 March and 17 October
Males	-0.9%	-5.3%	-2.2%	-7.0%
Females	-0.8%	-4.7%	-2.0%	-3.0%
<b>All persons</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>	<b>-4.4%</b>	<b>-2.1%</b>	<b>-5.1%</b>

a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions). Weekly change data are available in the Data downloads.

Graph 3 - Payroll jobs by sex, indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020 (a)



a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions). Weekly change data are available in the Data downloads section.

## Age groups

Since the week ending 14 March 2020 the largest changes across age groups were:

- Payroll jobs : Those worked by people aged 70 and over decreased by 13.9% and those worked by people aged under 20 increased by 10.1%
- Total wages : Payments to people aged under 20 increased by 28.3% and payments to people aged 70 and over decreased by 13.4%

Between the week ending 3 October 2020 and the week ending 17 October 2020 the largest changes across age groups were:

- Payroll jobs : Those worked by people aged under 20 increased by 2.0% and those worked by people aged 70 and over decreased by 1.9%
- Total wages : Payments to people aged 70 and over decreased by 4.9% and payments to people aged under 20 decreased by 4.4%

Table 3 - Percentage change by age group

	Payroll jobs		Total wages	
	Change between 3 October and 17 October (a)	Change between 14 March and 17 October	Change between 3 October and 17 October (a)	Change between 14 March and 17 October
Aged under 20	2.0%	10.1%	-4.4%	28.3%
20-29 year olds	-1.1%	-6.5%	-1.3%	-0.5%
30-39 year olds	-1.0%	-4.0%	-2.0%	-4.2%
40-49 year olds	-0.5%	-3.0%	-2.3%	-6.5%
50-59 year olds	-0.4%	-3.2%	-1.8%	-6.8%
60-69 year olds	-0.8%	-7.4%	-2.1%	-9.5%
Aged 70 and over	-1.9%	-13.9%	-4.9%	-13.4%
<b>All persons</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>	<b>-4.4%</b>	<b>-2.1%</b>	<b>-5.1%</b>

a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions). Weekly change data are available in the Data downloads.

## Industry

Since the week ending 14 March 2020 the largest changes across industry were:

- Payroll jobs : Accommodation and food services decreased by 18.0% and Arts and recreation services decreased by 15.0%
- Total wages : Accommodation and food services decreased by 18.3% and Mining decreased by 16.5%

Between the week ending 3 October 2020 and the week ending 17 October 2020 the largest changes across industry were:

- Payroll jobs : Agriculture, forestry and fishing decreased by 4.1% and Construction decreased by 3.6%
- Total wages : Rental, hiring and real estate services decreased by 7.0% and Mining decreased by 6.7%

**Table 4 - Percentage change by industry**

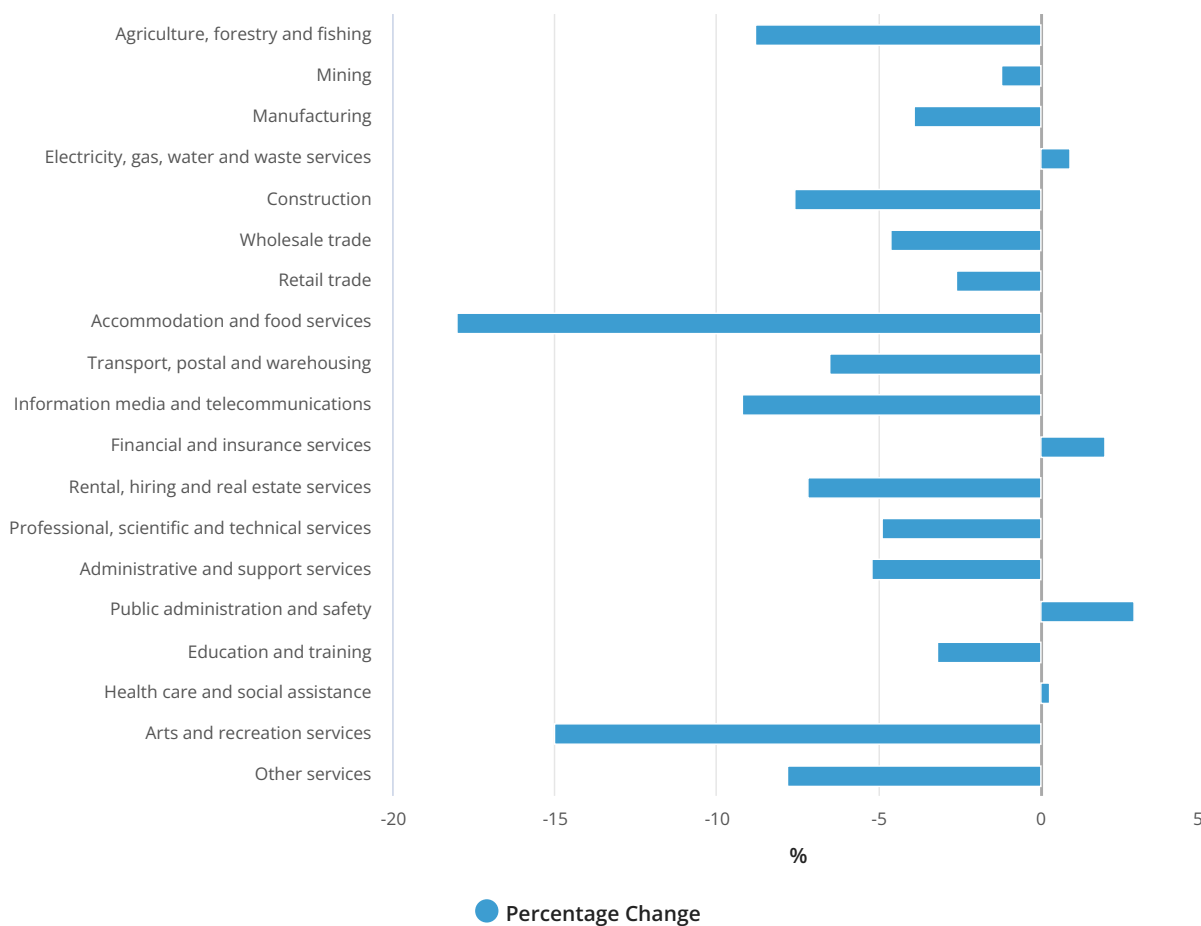
	Payroll jobs		Total wages	
	Change between 3 October and 17 October (a)	Change between 14 March and 17 October	Change between 3 October and 17 October (a)	Change between 14 March and 17 October
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	-4.1%	-8.8%	-3.7%	-3.5%
Mining (b)	0.8%	-1.2%	-6.7%	-16.5%
Manufacturing	0.0%	-3.9%	-0.5%	-7.6%
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	-0.4%	0.9%	-4.4%	1.8%
Construction	-3.6%	-7.6%	-3.2%	-8.1%
Wholesale trade	-0.7%	-4.6%	-1.8%	-11.1%
Retail trade	1.0%	-2.6%	-2.5%	-3.5%
Accommodation and food services	-2.6%	-18.0%	-6.6%	-18.3%
Transport, postal and warehousing	-0.4%	-6.5%	-5.6%	-10.1%
Information media and telecommunications	0.0%	-9.2%	0.0%	-4.1%
Financial and insurance services	0.1%	2.0%	-2.7%	-6.5%
Rental, hiring and real estate services	-1.9%	-7.2%	-7.0%	-7.2%
Professional, scientific and technical services	-1.5%	-4.9%	-1.0%	-4.9%
Administrative and support services	-1.5%	-5.2%	-3.5%	-3.6%
Public administration and safety	0.8%	2.9%	0.6%	0.2%
Education and training	1.8%	-3.2%	1.1%	-1.1%
Health care and social assistance	-1.4%	0.3%	-0.9%	2.5%
Arts and recreation services	-3.2%	-15.0%	-3.4%	-12.5%
Other services	-3.3%	-7.8%	-3.3%	-1.6%
<b>All industries</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>	<b>-4.4%</b>	<b>-2.1%</b>	<b>-5.1%</b>

a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs and wages. Weekly change data are available in the Data downloads.

b. The Mining industry wages estimates in March and September may include seasonal bonuses. Please refer to the seasonality section in [Data limitations and revisions \(https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions).



**Graph 4 - Percentage change in payroll jobs by Industry between 14 March**



## Industry sub-division - Payroll jobs

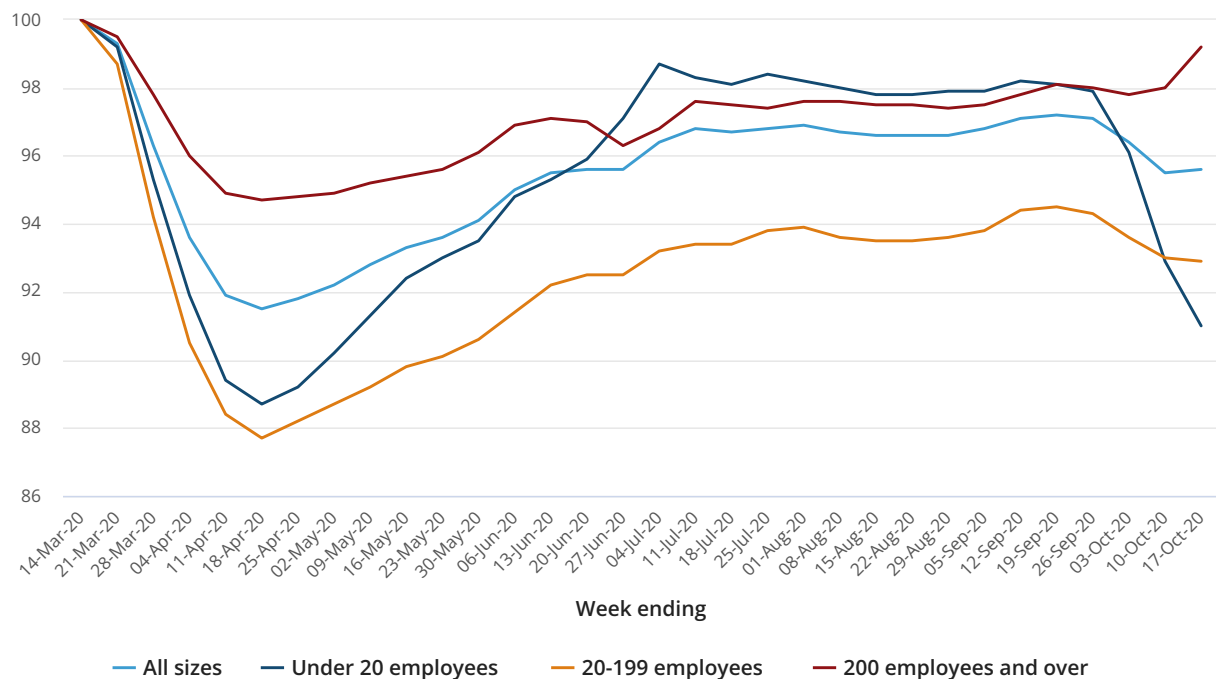
Estimates of payroll jobs by industry subdivision were updated through to the week ending 17 October 2020 were added to this release on Thursday 5 November 2020. Time series estimates (presented as index values) are available in Table 6 of the

The sub-division level is the second broadest grouping of industries within the [Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification \(https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1292.0\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/1292.0). Industry sub-divisions are built up from the industry groups which, in turn, are built up from industry classes.

## Employment size

The following experimental estimates present payroll jobs by employment size between the week ending 14 March 2020 and the week ending 17 October 2020.

Graph 5 - Payroll jobs by employment size, indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020 (a)(b)



a. Excludes a small number of businesses reporting in STP where employment size information was unable to be sourced from the ABS Business Register.

b. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-](https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-)

**Table 5 - Percentage change in Payroll jobs by state and territory, by employment size as at 14 March 2020 (a)**

	Change between 3 October and 17 October (b)	Change between 14 March and 17 October
<b>Under 20 employees</b>	<b>-5.3%</b>	<b>-9.0%</b>
New South Wales	-6.6%	-10.1%
Victoria	-5.1%	-13.3%
Queensland	-4.6%	-5.8%
South Australia	-3.9%	-4.2%
Western Australia	-4.4%	-4.3%
Tasmania	-3.2%	-7.1%
Northern Territory	-4.9%	-3.9%
Australian Capital Territory	-6.4%	-8.9%
<b>20-199 employees</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>	<b>-7.1%</b>
New South Wales	-1.3%	-6.5%
Victoria	0.2%	-11.7%
Queensland	-0.7%	-4.5%
South Australia	-0.3%	-4.7%
Western Australia	-1.8%	-3.6%
Tasmania	-2.0%	-7.9%
Northern Territory	-0.9%	-3.2%
Australian Capital Territory	-1.1%	-6.7%
<b>200 employees and over</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>-0.8%</b>
New South Wales	1.3%	0.2%
Victoria	1.6%	-3.4%
Queensland	1.5%	-0.8%
South Australia	1.8%	0.9%
Western Australia	0.9%	0.8%
Tasmania	1.3%	-1.6%
Northern Territory	0.5%	1.2%
Australian Capital Territory	1.6%	-0.3%

a. Excludes a small number of businesses reporting in STP where employment size information was unable to be sourced from the ABS Business Register.

b. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions).

## Employment size source

Employment size variables were determined from [ABS Business Register \(https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/dossbytitle/AC79D33ED6045E88CA25706E0074E77A?OpenDocument\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/dossbytitle/AC79D33ED6045E88CA25706E0074E77A?OpenDocument) data. The ABS Business Register is populated using administrative data from the Australian Business Register (ABR) and

business data from the Australian Tax Office (ATO). Data on the structures of large and complex businesses are also collected by ABS. The ABS Business Register is updated regularly and a frame of business, containing business characteristic information, is produced quarterly for use in the production of statistics.

The March 2020 quarterly frame was used to determine employment size for businesses reporting their payroll via STP and subsequently allocate their reported payroll jobs against. Once a payroll job is allocated to an employment size category, it is held constant against that category over time. By using the March 2020 quarter frame and holding employment size categorisation constant, the ABS is able to present information about the change in payroll jobs based on the employment size of businesses before Australia recorded its 100th confirmed COVID-19 case on 14 March 2020.

Businesses which are newly created after March 2020 are unable to be assigned a size and are subsequently excluded from the index calculation of employment size groups. These 'new' businesses are included in the calculation of all sizes category (for state and territory, and national level estimates). The number of STP reporting businesses 'born' since Australia recorded its 100th confirmed COVID-19 in March 2020 is considered small, hence their exclusion is expected to have minimal impact on the estimates. The ABS exploring how to incorporate newly created businesses into the employment size estimates and may include them in a future release.

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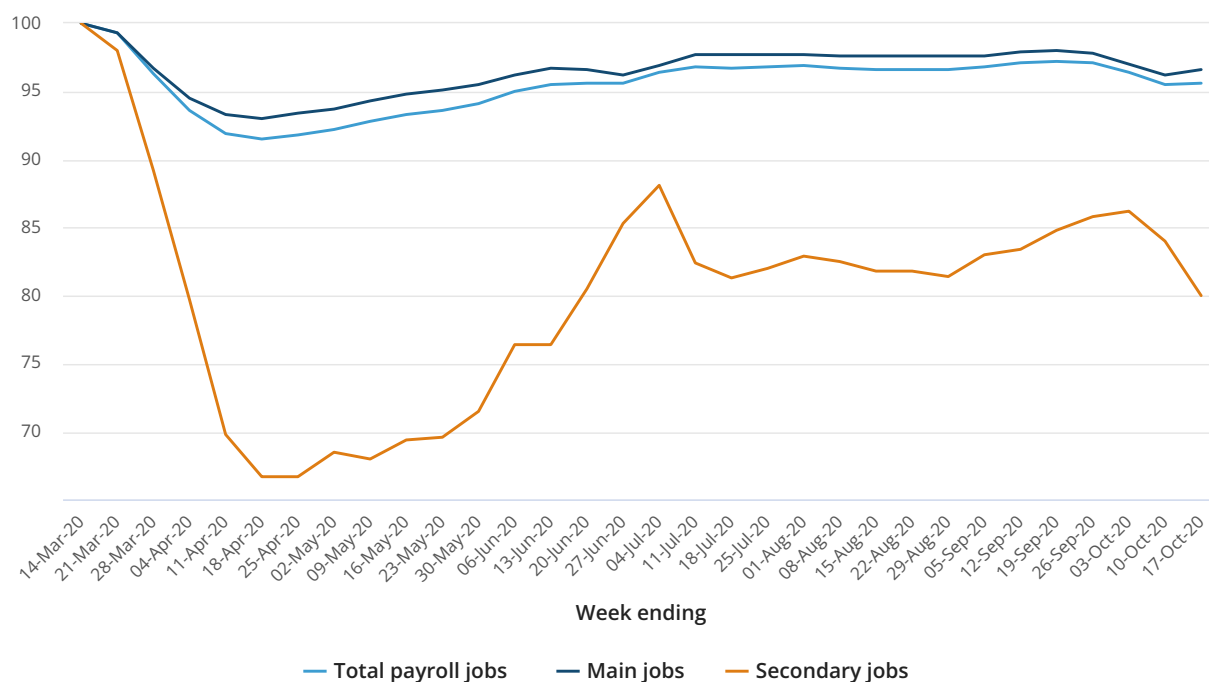
## Secondary jobs

The ABS estimates that the number of payroll jobs in the week ending 17 October 2020 was 4.4% lower than the week ending 14 March 2020. By the week ending 17 October 2020, payroll jobs considered as main jobs and secondary jobs remain 3.5% and 20.0% lower than mid-March levels. While not all jobs in the Australian labour market are captured within STP data, these data provide insight into the potential job retention dynamics of JobKeeper. JobKeeper only covers a single job for an eligible employee, supporting main jobs to a greater extent than secondary jobs. A more comprehensive (but less contemporary) analysis of multiple job holders in the Australian labour market can be found in [Jobs in Australia](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/jobs-australia/latest-release). (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/jobs-australia/latest-release>)

Total payroll jobs reached their lowest point in Australia in the week ending 18 April 2020 (down 8.5%). Analysis of STP data confirms that this was also the case for main and secondary jobs (down 7.0% and 33.3% respectively from the week ending 14 March). By the week ending 17 October half (50.4%) of main jobs loss to mid-April were recovered, whereas

for secondary jobs losses it was 40.0%.

Graph 6 - Main and secondary payroll jobs, indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020 (a)



a. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs. For more information, please see [Data limitations and revisions \(https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions\)](https://abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-17-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions).

Table 6 - Main and secondary jobs as a proportion of total payroll jobs

	Week ending 17 October	Week ending 14 March (a)
Main jobs	95.1%	94.1%
Secondary jobs	4.9%	5.9%
<b>Total payroll jobs</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

a. These proportions reflect updates to underlying time series data since the previous release of multiple job holdings information.

## Relationship with other labour statistics

The number of payroll jobs is not the same as the number of employed people in Labour

Force statistics for a range of reasons, one of which is multiple job holding. Each payroll job is counted separately in Single Touch Payroll data. Analysis of secondary job holdings as observed through STP data provide important insights into how these data may relate to person based measures in Labour Force statistics.

Prior to the COVID-19 period, the Australian Labour Account showed that around 6% of employed people worked multiple jobs at the same time. As of the June quarter 2020, the Labour Account showed that 94.2% of jobs in the labour market were 'main jobs' and 5.8% of jobs were 'secondary jobs' (i.e. other jobs worked concurrently by multiple job holders).

## Data downloads

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### I-note

These downloads are currently available in an Excel file format that may not be accessible for users of assistive devices, such as screen readers. [Contact us](#) (<mailto:labour.statistics@abs.gov.au>) and we can discuss the best way to meet your needs.

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#### Table 1: National spotlight

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[82.42 KB]

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#### Table 2: State and territory spotlight

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[347.85 KB]

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#### Table 3: Industry spotlight

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[623.69 KB]

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#### Table 4: Payroll jobs and wages indexes

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[2.49 MB]

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#### Table 5: Substate - Payroll jobs indexes

Estimates of payroll jobs by Statistical Area 4 (SA4) and Statistical Area 3 (SA3) to the week ending 3 October 2020, as updated on Wednesday 21 October 2020.

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[200.73 KB]

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#### Table 6: Industry subdivision - Payroll jobs index

Estimates of payroll jobs indexes by industry subdivision to the week ending 17 October 2020 were added on Thursday 5 November 2020.

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[57.76 KB]

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## Table 7: Employment size - Payroll jobs index

[↓ Download XLSX](#)  
[45.83 KB]

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## All data cubes

Updated to include Table 6 as released on Thursday 5 November 2020.

[↓ Download ZIP](#)  
[2.57 MB]

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## Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6160.0.55.001.

## History of changes

5 November 2020: Industry subdivision - Payroll jobs indexes (Table 6 of the Data downloads) updated to week ending 17 October.

4 November 2020: Units corrected from % to pts on Media release graph.

## Methodology

[Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia methodology, Week ending 17 October 2020](#)